

Lessons of Empire: The United States, the Quest for Colonial Expertise and the British Example, 1898-1917

Frank Schumacher

The Renaissance of Empire

Notions of empire have enjoyed a powerful renaissance in current debates about American foreign policy.¹ The term is increasingly used by proponents and opponents of America's global strategy to debate the benefits and pitfalls of Washington's approach to international order.² This discourse is strongly shaped by historical references as critics and supporters alike often locate American power within the wider context of the history of pre-modern and modern empires to understand the extent of American influence, to predict the possible demise of U.S. power, or to gain insights into the proper long-term defence and security of American interests.

Two analytical approaches have emerged with particular verve: one, most eloquently represented by Max Boot and Warren Zimmermann, has re-examined America's national experience with empire in the search for historical precedent.³ The acquisition and administration of overseas colo-

-
- 1 Literary scholar Bruce Robbins has argued: "Until very recently, there was no way you could use the word 'empire' in any but a critical sense. It's been a very, very long American tradition to set ourselves apart from the European notion of empire. The American public wouldn't support imperialism. But Americans have lost their shame about it". For Robbins' comments and a wider analysis of this trend: Julia Keller, Marja Mills, "'Empire' creeps into analyses of U.S. world role", *Chicago Tribune*, April 27, 2003.
 - 2 A convenient starting point to examine the various positions is provided in: Andrew J. Bacevich (ed.), *The Imperial Tense: Prospects and Problems of American Empire* (Chicago, IL 2003); Ulrich Speck, Natan Sznaider (eds.), *Empire Amerika: Perspektiven einer neuen Weltordnung* (München 2003).
 - 3 Highly recognized in the U.S. and best-selling are: Warren Zimmermann, *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made their Country a World Power* (New York 2002); Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York 2002); see also: Walter Russell Mead, "The Forefathers of Imperialism", *Los Angeles Times*, January 5, 2003, R 3; Josh London, "The Unlikely Imperialists", *Policy Review* 114 (August/September 2002) at: <http://www.policyreview.org/AUG02/london>, [10.07.2003]; Thomas Donnelly, "The Past as Prologue: An Imperial Manual", *Foreign Affairs* 81,4

nies is being re-examined and praised, the architects of empire celebrated, and the Philippine-American War, fought to contain colonial resistance, re-interpreted in light of the war on terror as “[...] one of the most successful counterinsurgencies waged by a Western army in modern times.”⁴

The second approach advanced by Niall Ferguson, Walter Russell Mead, Paul Kennedy and others, advocates close study of the British imperial experience to cure what Ferguson has diagnosed as “America’s denial of imperial power”. He suggests that the nation’s foreign policy direction in this matter should be based on understanding the rise and demise of the British Empire: “[...] Should the United States seek to shed or to shoulder the imperial load it has inherited? I do not believe that question can be answered without an understanding of how the British Empire rose and fell; and of what it did, not just for Britain but for the world as a whole”.⁵ And in his most recent best-selling book *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (sold in the United States with the suggestive subtitle *The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power*) Ferguson concludes: “The former American Secretary of State Dean Acheson famously said that Britain had lost an empire but failed to find a role. Perhaps the reality is that the Americans have taken our old role without yet facing the fact that an empire comes with it.”⁶

Curiously enough, the advocates of this reflective attempt to situate America’s pre-eminent position of power into a comparative historical perspective coupled with the suggestion to transfer imperial insights across time and space, are proposing nothing new but are repeating a

(July/August 2002), 165-70; Richard Holbrooke, “In the Beginning: A Fresh Look at the Early Years of American Empire”, *Foreign Affairs* 81,6 (November/December 2002), 148-52; James Chace, “Tomorrow the World”, *New York Review of Books*, November 21, 2002, at: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/15818>, [13.02.2003].

- 4 Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace*, 128; for Boot’s lessons from America’s colonial past: 336-52; see also: Max Boot, “Everything You Think You Know About the American Way of War is Wrong”, *Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Notes*, September 12, 2002, at: <http://www.fpri.org/enotes>, [13.02.2003]; Robert M. Cassidy, “Back to the Street with Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and Other Small Wars”, *Parameters. U.S. Army War College Quarterly* 34,2 (Summer 2004), 73-83; for a critique of Boot’s interpretation of the Philippine War: Greg Bankoff, “A Tale of Two Wars: The Other Story of America’s Role in the Philippines”, *Foreign Affairs* 81,6 (November/December 2002), 179-81.
- 5 Niall Ferguson, “America: an Empire in Denial”, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 49,29, March 28, 2003, B7; see also: Linda Colley, “What Britannia taught Bush”, *The Guardian*, September 20, 2002, G 2; Charles Tripp, “Von den Briten lernen”, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 2003, 11; Severin Weiland, “Imperium Americanum”, *Spiegel Online*, August 30, 2002; Paul Kennedy, “What Balfour could teach Bush”, *The Guardian*, November 29, 2001, Online Edition.
- 6 Niall Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (New York 2003), 370.

more than a century old American reflex. At an earlier critical juncture in the nation's history, when the United States was faced with the task of colonial state-building in the newly acquired overseas possessions, Americans embarked on and entered into a close examination of and an intense discourse with the British Empire on the intricacies of colonial rule.

Anti-Imperialism, Anglo-Saxonism and the Racial Construction of Empire

In the decades following the American civil war Anglo-American relations underwent a fundamental transformation from a largely confrontational and highly competitive to a cooperative relationship with competitive dimensions.⁷ This 'great rapprochement' (Bradford Perkins) was fostered and accompanied by, and accelerated through the transfer of power in the international system from British dominance to American primacy.⁸ It was mainly characterized by peaceful crisis management (i.e. the Venezuela Boundary Crisis 1895/96), the extension of mutual support in international affairs (i.e. during the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902), intensified transnational relations, and the development of a strong sense of kinship between Britain and the United States.⁹ American entrance into the club of colonial powers benefited from and

-
- 7 William N. Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft* (New York 1997); H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States, 1783-1952* (London 1954); Kenneth Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 1815-1908* (London 1967); Alexander E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States, 1895-1903* (London 1960); Charles S. Campbell, *Anglo-American Understanding, 1898-1903* (Baltimore 1957); R. G. Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism, 1898-1900* (Brisbane 1965); Bradford Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895-1914* (New York 1968).
- 8 Alfred E. Eckes, Jr., Thomas W. Zeiler, *Globalization and the American Century* (Cambridge, MA 2003), 9-37; Patrick K. O'Brien, Armand Clesse (eds.), *Two Hegemonies: Britain 1846-1914 and the United States 1941-2001* (Aldershot 2002).
- 9 This sense of kinship was most evident on the level of popular reactions to Queen Victoria's death and President McKinley's assassination. Americans, although staunchly republican, had come to regard Victoria as a model ruler. Her death in 1901 created enormous attention in the United States and inspired an outpouring of pro-British sentiment. Those sympathies were reciprocated when President McKinley was shot in September 1901 with strong expressions of British affection for and sympathy with the United States. Charles S. Campbell, Jr., "Anglo-American Relations, 1897-1901", in: Paolo E. Coletta (ed.), *Threshold to American Internationalism: Essays on the Foreign Policies of William McKinley* (New York 1970), 221-55; see also: Mike Sewell, "'All the English-Speaking Race is in Mourning': The Assassination of President Garfield and Anglo-American Relations", *The Historical Journal* 34,3 (September 1991), 665-86; Michael J. Sewell, "Queen of Our Hearts", in: Steve Ickinrill, Stephan Mills (eds.), *Victorianism in the United States: Its Era and Legacy* (Amsterdam 1992), 206-34.

simultaneously contributed to the intensification of this rapprochement process.

After victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898, the United States acquired colonial possessions in the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean and entered a phase in its national history in which empire and colonial state-building were equated with international stability, progress and civilization. To alleviate knowledge deficits about the intricacies of overseas colonial rule, the McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft administrations initiated and supported the systematic study of international models of colonial rule. In this search for colonial expertise the British Empire quickly emerged as a widely trusted reference point and instructive example for the successful government of overseas empire.

The double irony that an ex-colony now assumed colonial power and that this new empire turned for advice to its former imperial centre, from which it had separated in a bloody war for independence, prompted not only enthusiasm but also provoked sharp critique. Many contemporaries rejected the American project of empire-building and argued that such a quest violated the political core convictions which had guided the nation since the days of the founding fathers.¹⁰ A typical example was William Jennings Bryan, unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic Party in the 1900 presidential elections and one of the most outspoken anti-imperialists. Bryan ruled out that a republic could govern colonies without violating its most cherished political convictions: "Even if it could be shown that England's sovereignty over India had brought blessings to the Indian people and advantage to the inhabitants of Great Britain, we could not afford to adopt the policy. A monarchy can engage in work which a republic dare not undertake."¹¹ His negative assessment of British rule in India concluded that the unchecked execution of power and the rule by fiat without democratic legitimacy resulted in moral corruption and the ultimate degeneration of the imperial centre: "English rule in India is not bad because it is English, but because no race has yet appeared sufficiently

10 On anti-imperialism: Richard E. Welch Jr., *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill, NC 1979); E. Berkeley Thompkins, *Anti-Imperialism in the United States: The Great Debate, 1890-1920* (Philadelphia 1970); Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire. The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900* (New York 1968); Philip Foner, Richard C. Winchester (eds.), *The Anti-Imperialist Reader: A Documentary History of Anti-Imperialism in the United States* (New York 1984).

11 William Jennings Bryan, "British Rule in India", in: Bryan et al., *Republic or Empire? The Philippine Question* (Chicago, IL 1899), 68-80, here 69.

strong in character to resist the temptations which come with irresponsible power."¹²

Edward Atkinson, a New England businessman and prominent member of the *Anti-Imperialist League*, on the other hand openly praised the benefits of British colonial rule but rejected formal empire on moral grounds. He argued that the United States should abstain from formal colonialism and profit instead from the commercial opportunities provided by Britain's global reach. Atkinson preached the advantages of informal empire, advocated close Anglo-American cooperation, and favoured the British protectorate in Egypt as an example for the American Philippines. Administrators should be sent to the neutralized archipelago just as: "[...] Lord Cromer administers the affairs of Egypt under the Khe-dive."¹³

Finally, Andrew Carnegie, industrialist and social reformer, was a staunch advocate of inter-imperial lesson-learning and urged Americans to carefully study the British Empire before embarking on colonial adventures:

"Let us, therefore, reason together and be well assured, before we change our position, that we are making no plunge into an abyss. Happily, we have the experience of others to guide us, the most instructive being that of our own race in Great Britain".¹⁴

But Carnegie agreed at least in part with Bryan and warned that the history of British rule in India demonstrated that the colonial government of distant possessions would neither prove commercially attractive nor politically and militarily feasible in the long run. The colonized would ultimately rise up against their rulers and turn the colony into an unbearable liability with disastrous consequences for the imperial centre:

"It is only a matter of time when India, the so-called gem of the British crown, is to glitter red again. British control of India is rendered possible to-day only by the division of races, or rather of religions there. [...] but caste is rapidly passing away, and religious prejudices are softening. Whenever this distrust disappears, Britain is liable to be expelled, at a loss of life and treasure which cannot be computed."¹⁵

Despite his dire predictions and his rejection of American emulation of British imperial ways in the Philippines, Carnegie's arguments strongly resembled the racial kinship many American anti-imperialists displayed towards their British cousins during the great national debate on empire.

12 Bryan, "British Rule in India", 80.

13 Atkinson quoted in: Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire*, 101.

14 Andrew Carnegie, "Distant Possessions – The Parting of the Ways", *The North American Review* 167,2 (August 1898), 239-48, here 240.

15 Carnegie, "Distant Possessions", 244.

He insisted on the racial and civilizational superiority of the Anglo-Saxon nations and urged their unification in a global alliance under the leadership of the United States. Nicknamed "The Star-Spangled Scotchman", Carnegie, who flew a united flag which consisted of both, the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack over his Scottish summer castle, even argued that Britain's only hope for independence lay in the country's total emulation of America.¹⁶

Carnegie's position may have been at the extreme end of the scale of justifications for anti-imperial opposition, but his strong disposition towards a racially defined sense of Anglo-American unity as well as a powerful belief in the interconnectedness of race, progress, and civilization, was representative for many critics of imperial expansion. They often strongly opposed British colonial rule and rejected its emulation but operated at the same time within a discourse whose parameters were also set by notions of racial Anglo-Saxon superiority, a tendency shared with the advocates of empire.

For the supporters of an American empire, Anglo-American solidarity and lesson-learning from the British, such as Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, Albert J. Beveridge, John Hay, and Alfred Thayer Mahan, Anglo-Saxonism provided a powerful impetus and reassuring racialized ideological framework. The concept advanced the argument that the civilization of the English-speaking nations was superior to that of any other nation because of inherited racial traits and characteristics, in particular industry, intelligence, adventurousness, and talent for self-government. Those abilities were contrasted with the accomplishments of other races in a hierarchy of racial success.¹⁷ Advocates emphasized that Anglo-Saxonism had provided the basis for the perfection of democratic government and that Britain and America were consequently ideally suited for the civilizational uplift of the imperial mandate. In addition, Anglo-Saxonism fused with a social-Darwinist conception of international rela-

16 Beisner, *Twelve against Empire*, 171-72.

17 On Anglo-Saxonism and the American empire: Paul A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910", *Journal of American History* 88,4 (March 2002), 1315-53; Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA 1981); Anna-Maria Martellone, "In the Name of Anglo-Saxondom, for Empire and for Democracy: The Anglo-American Discourse, 1880-1920", in: David K. Adams, Cornelis A. van Minnen (eds.), *Reflections on American Exceptionalism* (Keele 1994), 83-96; Stuart Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations, 1895-1904* (Rutherford, NJ 1981).

tions turned colonialism into a racial mission and obligation for the betterment of global conditions.

Closely connected to the racial justification for empire and Anglo-American cooperation was the idea that holding colonies would enable American men to escape the degenerating and emasculating influences of civilization.¹⁸ The colonial project and with it the testing of a martial spirit was deemed an essential task in the process of character-building. Many imperialist tapped into widespread cultural concern in Victorian America about overcivilization, effeminacy, and racial decadence and worried that modern civilization produced soft, self-absorbed, and materialistic middle class men who would prove detrimental to the political system. One of the most ardent advocates of the "strenuous life", Theodore Roosevelt, expressed those fears in a letter to his English friend Cecil Arthur Spring Rice:

"I do not wonder that you sometimes feel depressed over the future both of our race and of our civilization. [...] I should be a fool if I did not see great cause for anxiety in some of the social tendencies of the day: the growth of luxury throughout the English-speaking world; and especially the gradually diminishing birth rate; and certain other signs of like import are not pleasant to contemplate."¹⁹

This discourse on the rejuvenating influences of empire-building drew not only on an assessment of American history but was borrowed from British imperialists' claims that the colonial project would prevent degeneracy.²⁰ American advocates of empire agreed with Sir G.S. Clarke's exposition of the beneficial impact of empire-building on British manhood and national character and imagined equally positive consequences for American society:

"[...] to India we owe in great measure the training of our best manhood. India makes men, though it does not 'grow' them, and the influence, example and education of the men whom India makes react powerfully upon the whole social and political structure of the nation. [...] In a lesser degree, Egypt, South, East and West Africa and other por-

18 American discourses on manliness and empire are discussed in: Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood. How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT 1998); Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago, IL 1995), 170-216.

19 Roosevelt quoted in: Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 139; the phrase 'strenuous life' is from the title of a Roosevelt speech before the Hamilton Club in Chicago 1899, published in: Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses* (New York 1900).

20 Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 140.

tions of the empire are contributing continuously to the national vigor; [...] The empire, with all its risks, anxieties and burdens, is now more than ever producing men."²¹

The Administration of Empire: Questions of Colonial Governance

In a surge of Anglo-American rapprochement, embedded in a transatlantic discourse on manliness and empire, and accompanied by heavy dosages of ideological Anglo-Saxonism, many Americans praised the advantages of British rule, the efficiency of its colonial administration, and its enlightened approach to colonial state building.

This pro-British empire attitude was further enabled by a discursive conceptual differentiation of what was described as 'negative' and 'positive' forms of imperial control.²² 'Negative' imperialism was characterized by conquest, the mere desire for profit and the resulting exploitation of the indigenous population. 'Positive' imperialism aimed at order out of chaos and placed great emphasis on fostering the development and civilization-ary 'uplift' of the colonized. This distinction and the accompanying re-interpretation of British rule in India in particular, enabled many American proponents of overseas expansion to openly praise the accomplishments of the British Empire.²³

This approach of inter-imperial lesson learning guided those charged with the creation of a suitable administrative context for America's new overseas possessions. In December of 1899 for example, Secretary of War, Elihu Root, the chief architect of America's colonial policies, wrote to a friend:

"The first thing I did after my appointment was to make out a list of a great number of books which cover in detail both the practice and the principles of many forms of colo-

-
- 21 Sir G. S. Clark, "Imperial Responsibilities a National Gain", *The North American Review* 168,2 (February 1899), 129-41, here 137-38.
 - 22 John M. Coski suggested this discursive conceptual differentiation in: *The Triple Mandate: The Concept of Trusteeship and American Imperialism, 1898-1934* (Phil. diss. College of William and Mary, 1987), 60-62.
 - 23 For many American advocates of imperial expansion Britain's brutal suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in India, 1857-58, had been a watershed in London's administration of the subcontinent, after which enlightened, selfless, and impartial civil servants were trusted with the administration and the East India Company abolished; for the impact of British actions in India on American anti-imperialists: Alan Raucher, "American Anti-Imperialists and the Pro-India Movement, 1900-1932", *Pacific Historical Review* 43,1 (1974), 83-110.

nial government under the English law, and I am giving them all the time I can take from my active duties".²⁴

The secretary kept a reference library of mostly British texts on colonial law and administration in his office and considered the systematic evaluation of the activities of other colonial powers an essential guide to American decision-making. So did the State Department under John Hay who instructed American diplomats in Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Germany, to collect and forward comprehensive analyses of those nation's colonial policies.²⁵

President McKinley followed the same direction and instructed the First Philippine Commission under the direction of Cornell University president Jacob Gould Schurman to collect information on modes of colonial governance in preparation for American rule in the Philippines. This commission carefully studied the situation in the archipelago and compiled substantial data and analyses on the colonial practice of other powers in the region. In this context, Montague Kirkwood, a British lawyer who had already served as an advisor to the Japanese colonial administration of Formosa, prepared a thorough analysis of the administrative, judicial, social, and military dimensions of British rule in India, Burma, Ceylon, the Federated Malay States, and the Straits Settlement. This analysis "Administration of British Colonies in the Orient" was included in the final four-volume *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President* officially presented on January 21, 1900.²⁶

The recommendations of colonial experts were accompanied by the massive research program initiated by the Library of Congress and a number of government departments to collect information from all colonies and dependencies worldwide.²⁷ Some of the results, such as the

24 Letter Root to Samuel L. Parish, December 1, 1899, Elihu Root Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

25 Hay to Samuel Porter (France) No. 613, Hay to Choate (Great Britain) No. 111, Hay to Stanford Newell (Netherlands) No. 217, Hay to Henry White (Germany) No. 858, May 2, 1899, RG 59, Diplomatic Instructions, Microfilm Series M77.

26 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President*, S. Doc. 138, 56th Congress, 1st Session, 1900, hereafter referred to as *RPC*.

27 The Library of Congress became an initial clearing house for information on other colonial systems and information on America's colonial possessions. On request by Henry Cabot Lodge, chairman of the Senate Committee on the Philippines, it compiled extensive bibliographies on material available to colonial decision-makers. For example: A.P.C. Griffin, *A List of Books Relating to the Theory of Colonization, Government of Dependencies, Protectorates, and Related Topics* (Washington, DC 1900); idem, *A List of Books Relating to Cuba (with Reference to Collected Works and Periodicals)* (Washington, DC 1898); idem, *A List of Books Relating to Hawaii (with Reference to Collected Works and Periodicals)* (Washington, DC 1898); idem, *A List of Books (with Reference to Periodicals) on the Philip-*

Treasury Department's report *The Colonial Systems of the World* received widespread distribution and remained in use for years as standard reference texts in executive as well as legislative deliberations on colonial policies.²⁸ Its conclusions confirmed the McKinley administration's particular interest in the emulation of British models:

"The most acceptable and therefore most successful of the colonial systems are those in which the largest liberty of self-government is given to the people. The British colonial system, which has by far outgrown that of any other nation, gives, wherever practicable, a large degree of self-government to the colonies".²⁹

Advocacy of learning from the British Empire was not limited to governmental decision-making circles but was complemented by a widespread and intense public discourse, carried out in the nation's magazines and newspapers. Their contributions often extensively praised the accomplishments of British colonial rule as the American public was introduced to the intricacies of colonial law, administration, and comparative colonial trade. The crown's representatives in Egypt, the Malay Straits, India, and Hong Kong became icons of popular reference and Anglo-American solidarity.

A case in point was the highly popular home-study circle initiated by the *Los Angeles Times* in 1901. Between February and June, the paper's "current topic club" presented a seventeen-part series with "papers by experts and specialists" which introduced the general reader to the colonial practice of the major powers in most parts of the world.³⁰ Directed by

pinus in the Library of Congress (Washington, DC 1903); idem, *A List of Books (with Reference to Periodicals) on Porto Rico* (Washington, DC 1901); idem, *A List of Books (with Reference to Periodicals) on Samoa and Guam* (Washington, DC 1901); idem, *A List of Works Relating to the American Occupation of the Philippine Islands, 1898-1903* (Washington, DC 1905).

28 Department of the Treasury, *Colonial Administration, 1800-1900: Methods of Government and Development Adopted by the Principal Colonizing Nations in their Control of Tropical and Other Colonies and Dependencies* (Washington, DC 1901), 1199.

29 Ibid., 1407.

30 Edgumbe Staley, "The British Empire in India", *The Los Angeles Times* (hereafter referred to as LAT), February 19, 1901, 7; idem, "Burma: A Typical Indian Province", LAT, February 26, 1901, 7; Alfred Stead, "Egypt and the Sudan", LAT, March 5, 1901, 7; Walter Hodgson, "Zanzibar, A Ward of Court", LAT, March 12, 1901, 7; Ernest W. Clement, "Japanese Rule in Formosa", LAT, March 19, 1901, 12; Robert de Caiz, "The Colonial Policy of France", LAT, March 26, 1901, 12; idem, "The Colonies of France - Their Trade and Government", LAT, April 2, 1901, 7; John E. George, "German Colonization", LAT, April 9, 1901, 7; idem, "Germany's Colonial Policy", LAT, April 16, 1901, 7; Harry Tuck Sherman, "The Dutch East Indies", LAT, April 23, 1901, 7; Edgumbe Staley, "Majorities [sic, Mauritius] - A Hermitage of Conquest", LAT, April 30, 1901, 7; Robert M. Hackett, "The Maoris of New Zealand", LAT, May 7, 1901, 14; Edgumbe Staley, "Government of British Colonies - A Profit and Loss Account", LAT, May 14, 1901, 12; Harry Tuck Sherman, "The Congo Free State", LAT, May 21, 1901, 14; Alfred Stead, "British North

John Huston Finley, a Professor of Politics at Princeton University, the collection "Colonial Governments of Today" particularly praised the accomplishments of the British Empire whose colonial rule in India prominently opened the series and whose overall accomplishments were featured in the final series contribution entitled "Why Great Britain Succeeds as a Colonizer".

In conclusion Alfred Stead, a fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute, suggested to his American readership that the United States would profit in studying the British example:

"In the Malay archipelago Great Britain has had to deal with many of the elements of trouble with which the United States is now face to face with in the Philippines. These she has successfully overcome and now has the satisfaction of owning colonies at peace and growing in prosperity in the extreme."³¹

But he also warned that America should refrain from granting the colonized too much political power until they had reached a higher plane of political maturity and thus confirmed through British experience the legitimizing discourse on America's civilizing mission in the tropics:

"While Great Britain gives great latitude to the natives in her possessions, as far as local affairs are concerned, she is very particular that they shall acquire no real ruling power, or at least, no overwhelming voice in the ruling power [...] it would be suicidal to follow any other course until at least the natives have reached at least a high level of education and civilization."³²

During this period of intense search for colonial models, universities, professional organizations, and scholarly journals also placed themselves at the service of empire. In particular, historians, sociologists, political scientists, and economists advanced the call for close inter-imperial learning and initiated numerous research projects into a wide variety of colonial issues.³³ The nation's universities established courses in comparative colonial administration and economy relying heavily on British expertise.³⁴ The

Borneo", in: June 4, 1901, 12; Morgan L. Finucane, "The Fiji Islands", *LAT*, June 11, 1901, 14; Alfred Stead, "Why Great Britain Succeeds as a Colonizer", *LAT*, June 18, 1901, 14.

31 Idem, "Why Great Britain Succeeds as a Colonizer", *LAT* June 18, 1901, 14.

32 Ibid.

33 Gary Marotta, "The Academic Mind and the Rise of U.S. Imperialism: Historians and Economists as Publicists for Ideas of Colonial Expansion", *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 42,2 (April 1983), 217-34; Franklin Chew Lun Ng, *Governance of American Empire: American Colonial Administration and Attitudes, 1898-1917* (Phil. diss. University of Chicago, 1975); Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany 1998), ch. 4.

34 A number of British authors on colonialism reached fame as standard textbooks and reference works: John R. Seely, *The Expansion of England* (Boston, MA 1898); Charles W. Dilke, *Greater Britain* (New York 1869); Edward Gibbon Wakefield, *A View of the Art of Colonization with Present Reference to the British Empire* (London 1849); Archibald R. Col-

University of Chicago even appointed a Colonial Commissioner, Alleyne Ireland, who gained prominence as a prolific writer, government advisor, and ardent proponent of transplanting British colonial methods to America's new overseas territories.³⁵

On the colonial frontier, Americans also tapped into the resources of British imperial experience. They devoured the writings and reminiscences of imperial administrators, such as Lord Cromer, frequently visited British colonies in the neighbourhood, conducted inspection tours in Egypt and India, and travelled halfway around the world to meet top-level officials of the empire's colonial civil service.³⁶ Or they simply visited the colonial office in London like Captain George Langhorne, who recalled later:

"[...] in 1899, en route to the Philippines for the first time, I passed through London and went to the colonial office there, and [...] asked the officials if they had any colony where the people were similar to those in these islands. They then told me of the Malay States and gave me a number of blue books, reports, etc. [...] They were of much use in the associations I had with the Filipinos during my first tour in Luzon".³⁷

quhoun, *The Mastery of the Pacific* (New York 1899); highly influential were also works by famous British colonial administrators such as Evelyn Baring Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (New York 1908); George Nathaniel Curzon, *Lord Curzon in India* (New York 1906).

- 35 Ng, *Governance of American Empire*, 75-87; for a selection of Ireland's writings: *Tropical Colonization: An Introduction to the Study of the Subject* (New York 1899); *The Anglo-Boer Conflict* (Boston, MA 1900); *The Control and Development of Tropical Colonies: Syllabus of a Course of Six Lecture-Studies* (Chicago, IL 1900); "The Cohesive Elements of British Imperialism", *Outlook* 63 (December 1899), 744-50; "Colonial Policy in the Far East", *Outlook* 79, (March 25, 1905), 744-50; "European Experience with Tropical Colonies", *Atlantic Monthly* 82 (December 1898), 729-35; "The Far Eastern Tropics: Studies in Colonial Administration I. Introductory", *Outlook* 72, (November 22, 1902), 684-88; "The Far Eastern Tropics: Studies in Colonial Administration II. Hong Kong", *Outlook* 72, (November 29, 1902), 741-45; "A Few Facts about the Colonies of the Great Powers", *McClure's Magazine* 14 (February 1900), 334-38; "Growth of the British Colonial Conception", *Atlantic Monthly* 83 (April 1899), 488-98; "India and British Imperialism", *Century Magazine* 105 (November 1922), 147-54; "Studies in Colonial Administration III. British North Borneo", *Outlook* 74, (May 2, 1903), 128-32; "Studies in Colonial Administration V. Burma", *Outlook* 75, (July 25, 1903), 127-32; "Studies in Colonial Administration VI. The Federated Malay States", *Outlook* 76, (February 27, 1904), 502-506; "Studies in Colonial Administration VII. The Straits Settlements", *Outlook* 77, (May 14, 1904), 122-26.
- 36 We have for example detailed descriptions of at least five meetings between W. Cameron Forbes, Governor General of the Philippines and Lord Cromer in London. Descriptions are to be found in Forbes' excellent diaries: i.e. *Journals of W. Cameron Forbes*, First Series, Vol. III, January 1909 [there is only one long entry for the month] LC Manuscript Division; First Series, Vol. V, June 1, 1912; First Series Vol. V, November 17, 1913; Second Series, Vol. I, April 17, 1915.
- 37 Langhorne quoted in: Donna J. Amoroso, "Inheriting the 'Moro Problem': Muslim Authority and Colonial Rule in British Malaya and the Philippines", in: Julian Go, Anne L. Foster (eds.), *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives* (Durham, NC 2003), 118.

And yet, despite their enthusiasm for the British record of colonial empire, those charged with the development of an American way of empire tried to bridge outside expertise with national traditions. They emphasized that American colonial state-building would, whenever possible, also utilize the nation's experience with continental expansion. For Secretary Root for example it was imperative:

"To take the lessons we could get from the colonial policy of other countries, especially Great Britain, and to apply it to the peculiar situation arising from the fundamental principles of our own government, which lead to certain necessary conclusions which don't exist in Great Britain or Holland, notwithstanding the spirit of liberty and freedom in both those countries".³⁸

This flexible approach resembled what theorists of cultural transfer have described as appropriation and rejection. Information is borrowed freely from the experience of others, reconfigured, and applied to the national context.³⁹ The British experience of empire thus provided an intellectual framework within which Americans could discuss their own ideas about colonial rule.⁴⁰ The insights from inter-imperial exchanges were pitted against the nation's core values and experiences with continental expansion.

A case in point was the final report of the First Philippine Commission. Schurman and his colleagues were aware that many Americans favoured a system of colonial governance for the Philippines modelled on the basis of British 'know-how'.⁴¹ A substantial portion of the commission's recom-

38 Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root* (Binghamton, NY 1938), 345; in an interview with Jessup in September, 1930, Root elaborated this theme further, see: Philip C. Jessup Papers, LC Manuscript Division, Part I: Elihu Root Material, 1600-1939, interview September 20, 1930, box 227.

39 As introduction to the concept of cultural transfer: Johannes Paulmann, "Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer: Zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts", *Historische Zeitschrift* 267 (1998), 649-85; Johannes Paulmann, "Interkultureller Transfer zwischen Deutschland und Großbritannien: Einführung in ein Forschungskonzept", in: Rudolf Muhs, Johannes Paulmann, Willibald Steinmetz (eds.), *Aneignung und Abwehr: Interkultureller Transfer zwischen Deutschland und Großbritannien im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bodenheim 1998), 21-43; Christiane Eisenberg, "Kulturtransfer als historischer Prozess: Ein Beitrag zur Komparatistik", in: Hartmut Kaelble, Jürgen Schriewer (eds.), *Vergleich und Transfer: Komparatistik in den Sozial-, Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt a. M. 2003), 399-417.

40 Akira Iriye, "Intercultural Relations", in: Alexander DeConde (ed.), *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy: Studies of the Principal Movements and Ideas* (New York 1978), 428-41.

41 The commissioners concluded "The example of Great Britain who has been brilliantly successful in governing dependent peoples, has suggested a colonial form of government for the Philippines; and this plan seems to have won greater favor with the general public than any other. It will be well, therefore, to examine with some care the different

mendation was thus spent on a detailed analysis of the appropriateness of the three main types of British colonial governance (self-governing colony, crown colony, and colony with representative institutions but without responsible government) for application to the Philippines. The commissioners concluded that the islands lacked any preparation for self government.⁴² They also rejected status as a crown colony as America's absolute control would contradict the goal of ultimate self-government for the Filipinos:

"The crown colony furnishes through the agency of the British colonial service an excellent administration of affairs; justice is dispensed, taxes are honestly collected and expended, roads and other public improvements are made, property is secure and life inviolate. But as the government is imposed upon the people from without, it is inimical to the habit of self-government, and this, with all its excellencies, is its fatal defect. For this reason it must be rejected as a model for the Philippines."⁴³

This left only the colony with representative institutions but without responsible government which the commission found close to ideal for transfer to the archipelago. The system agreed with the commission's desire to provide as much self-rule as possible for the Filipinos but it criticized London's ultimate veto power over local decisions and thus suggested a modified version which resembled many aspects of the American Territorial system of government:

"It does not appear, therefore, that in themselves any of the British types of colonial government is susceptible of direct application to the Philippine Islands. On the contrary, the only one with any promise in it points rather to the American plan of Territorial government, in which it seems to find its full fruition."⁴⁴

The only area for which Schurman and his colleagues proposed the direct application of British modes of colonial rule was the southern Muslim part of the Philippines which was to be placed under a separate form of administration (similar to a protectorate). In this case the report concluded:

"But while [...] it is impossible, even were it deemed desirable, to transfer the Malayan form of protectorate to the Philippine Islands, the exceptional condition of the Sulu Archipelago and portions of Mindanao and Palawan [...] calls for special treatment, which

kinds of British colonies and the corresponding types of colonial government", *RPC*, 103-4.

42 "There is no analogy between the relation of the self-governing colony of Australia or Canada to Great Britain and that of the Philippine Islands to the United States. Instead of community of blood, race, and language there is the greatest diversity, and instead of a common political experience the one has always breathed the air of freedom, the other has been repressed and atrophied by despotism. Clearly the plan of a self-governing colony is a misfit to the Philippines." *RPC*, 104.

43 *RPC*, 105.

44 *RPC*, 106.

may, in the opinion of the Commission, wisely follow the general lines laid down by Sir Andrew Clarke in dealing with analogous conditions in the Malay Peninsula."⁴⁵

The deliberations of the First Philippine Commission did not convince Washington of the need to provide the colonized with as much political power as possible. In fact, the 1902 *Organic Act* provided a system of governance which mostly resembled the contours of a British crown colony. And yet, the commission's recommendations indicated the willingness and desire of Americans charged with colonial state-building to creatively appropriate outside input and combine it with the experience of the nation's continental expansion.⁴⁶

Advocacy of the relevance of the nation's history emphasized the evolutionary nature of the American system of progression from territory to statehood as exemplified by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and the administration of the Louisiana Territory.⁴⁷ Territories would pass through a state of preparation during which the inhabitants would acquire basic experience and training for self-government. It was this sense of progression that inspired the tendency to differentiate between American and

45 *RPC*, 101.

46 The last military governor of Puerto Rico, General George W. Davis, similarly suggested a strong orientation towards British modes of colonial rule combined with elements derived from American Territorial government. Davis analyzed the British colonies in the Caribbean which he classified in a similar manner as the Philippine Commission. He recommended the colonial model found in the crown colony of Trinidad and advised the addition of an appointed governor and executive council to be ultimately followed by a legislative assembly to be elected by the Puerto Ricans. Davis borrowed from the crown colony model and combined it with elements found in the territorial government of Hawaii. In contrast to Hawaii, however, Puerto Rico should remain a dependency and not a territory for ultimate incorporation into the United States. Puerto Rico should develop from a form resembling that of a crown colony to that of a colony with representative institutions: "The degree of autonomy that this project contemplates is very much broader than that accorded now to the English crown colonies and approaches to that accorded to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape Settlements. It provides for as large a measure of self-government as the Puerto Ricans are capable of using wisely [...] While this proposed scheme bears some resemblance to that under which some English colonies are now administered, there are many points in which it differs", George W. Davis quoted in: Lanny Thompson, "The Imperial Republic: A Comparison of the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion after 1898", *Pacific Historical Review* 71,4 (2002), 535-74, here 557.

47 For example: H.K. Carroll, "The Territorial System of Our New Possessions", *Outlook* 63, (December 23, 1899), 966-68; this positive identification with America's past was not undisputed. Some critics decried the incompetence and the lack of professionalism in previous territorial administration. For critique and the demand for a professional civil service: David Starr Jordan, "Colonial Lessons of Alaska", *Atlantic Monthly* 82 (November 1898), 577-91; A. Lawrence Lowell, *Colonial Civil Service: The Selection and Training of Colonial Officials in England, Holland, and France: With an Account of the East India College at Haileyburg, 1806-1857* (New York 1900).

British approaches to colonial administration. While London focussed on the development of colonial infrastructures, Americans would focus on the preparation of the colonized for self government and eventual independence. For the Philippines this produced a dual approach. The administrative framework for the northern half of the archipelago resembled that of a British crown colony. The sovereign power retained complete legislative and executive authority over the islands as the Filipinos were deemed largely unfit for popular participation in government and because the continued war in the archipelago made it impossible for American government to give too much power to locally elected representatives before not total control had been established. Indigenous political participation was postponed until an unspecified later date.

In the southern half of the islands, in Sulu, Mindanao, and Palawan populated by Muslim ethnic groups referred to as Moros, Washington at first followed the indirect rule model established by Britain in the Malay Straits, where British officials governed in the name of Malay sultans. Americans perceived this framework of colonial rule as a system that preserved indigenous structures of authority while securing strict British control over revenues and expenditures.

In July of 1899, Brigadier-General John Bates negotiated a treaty with the Moros in which indigenous rulers recognized the supreme authority of the United States and promised to suppress piracy in exchange for economic subsidies and relative freedom of action.⁴⁸ The main goal of this agreement was to prevent the southern islands from joining the independence struggle of the North led by Emilio Aguinaldo. Once the independence army had been defeated by the summer of 1902, the Bates-Treaty and its concept of indirect rule became an obstacle to the American way of empire.

The United States aimed at integrating the various components of the Philippines into one colony under complete American control. The widespread practices of polygamy and slavery among the Moros made them backward and uncivilized in American eyes and resulted in the preferential treatment of the northern Christian Filipinos over the Muslim South. A heterogeneous alliance of church leaders, abolitionists, progressive reformers, and staunch imperialists exerted increasing pressure on the U.S. government to abandon the British model of indirect rule which was in-

48 On American policies in the southern Philippines: Peter G. Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899-1920* (Quezon City 1983).

creasingly considered a liability. As Leonard Wood, first governor of the Moro Province wrote to an English friend:

“You are quite content to maintain rajahs and sultans and other species of royalty, but we, with our plain ideas of doing things, find these gentlemen outside of our scheme of government, and so have to start at this kind of proposition a little differently”.⁴⁹

Such an approach, Wood admitted, might work within the British system but would be counterproductive to America’s long-term plans. Instead Wood and others, now began to apply insights derived from Indian-white relations to the southern Philippines.⁵⁰ The Bureau of Insular Affairs, the American equivalent to the colonial office in London, devised removal plans while the U.S. Army launched a war on the Filipino Muslims which lasted up to World War One to subjugate the Moros and militarily prepare their assimilation into mainstream colonial society.

The Policing of Empire: Questions of Colonial Military Affairs

From the American point of view, the successful administration of the Philippines depended first and foremost on complete military control over the islands. But after the surrender of Spain the United States was soon engaged in one of the bloodiest and most costly colonial wars ever. Between 1899 and 1913 the United States fought against the Filipino independence movement under Emilio Aguinaldo and militarily pacified the southern Muslim part of the archipelago. In the initial phase of the war American troops quickly advanced and struck numerous devastating blows to their Filipino opponents. But after the independence forces embarked on a campaign of guerilla warfare the U.S. Army increasingly confronted unexpected challenges and ultimately embarked on a campaign characterized by massive retaliatory measures against the archipelago’s civilian population. By 1902 more than 130,000 American soldiers had

49 Wood quoted in: Donna J. Amoroso, “Inheriting the ‘Moro Problem’: Muslim Authority and Colonial Rule in British Malaya and the Philippines”, in: Go, Foster (eds.), *The American Colonial State*, 139.

50 Peter G. Gowing, “Moros and Indians: Commonalities of Purpose, Policy, and Practice in American Government of two Hostile Subject Peoples”, *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 8 (1980), 125-49; for the application of Indian stereotypes and experiences beyond the southern Philippines: Walter L. Williams, “United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation: Implication for the Origins of American Imperialism”, *Journal of American History* 66,4 (March 1980), 810-31; Anne Paulet, *The Only Good Indian is a Dead Indian: The Use of United States Indian Policy as a Guide for the Conquest and Occupation of the Philippines, 1898-1905* (Phil. diss. Rutgers University, 1995); see also: Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York 2000).

fought in a war which killed more than 4,200 U.S. soldiers and wounded another 3,500. During those first four years only, approximately 20,000 Filipino soldiers were killed, one quarter of the armed forces of the independence movement. Conservative estimates assess the number of civilian casualties at least as high as 250,000, some studies suggest that losses may have been as high as 750,000, approximately 10 per cent of the pre-war population.⁵¹

During this war tropical acclimatization and numerous infectious diseases constituted a powerful and ever present challenge to American troops and were among the main causes for disability and death in the colonial army. While combat injuries accounted for roughly 10 percent of disabled soldiers, the disease rate reached 50 per cent in numerous regiments by late 1900.⁵² The Army Medical Department argued that the climate with its high humidity and continuous temperatures of well over 100 degrees weakened the soldiers from northern environments and made them highly susceptible to tropical diseases.⁵³ The improvement of health conditions thus became a top priority for the military command whose most trusted and important reference point for reform was the British military experience in tropical possessions. Like the colonial administrators, military surgeons embarked on extensive inspection tours of neighbouring colonies and entered into a continuous information exchange with their British counterparts.

51 Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, KA 2000); idem, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill, NC 1989); Stuart Creighton Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation": The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven, CT 1982); John M. Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1898-1902* (Westport, CT 1973).

52 Data in: Mary Gillett, *The Army Medical Department 1865-1917* (Washington, DC 1995), 216.

53 Climatic induced health concerns remained foremost on the minds of military planners during the first decade of the 20th century even after medical research and social engineering had improved conditions for American soldiers and civilians in the Philippines. The Philippine Commission, America's colonial executive council reported in 1901: "While it may be confidently anticipated that the establishment of a well-organized department of public health in these islands will lead to a general improvement in sanitary conditions, it will doubtless remain true that troops which are forced to campaign in the damp lowlands, or to garrison towns which have sprung up in situations where towns should never have been built, will suffer more or less severely from diarrhea, dysentery, and malaria", U.S. Department of War, *Report of the Philippine Commission, 1901*, Vol. 1, 63-64; on American public health policies and tropical medicine in the Philippines: Anderson Warwick, *Colonial Pathologies: American Medicine in the Philippines, 1898-1921* (Phil. diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1992); Warwick Anderson, "Immunities of Empire: Race, Disease, and the New Tropical Medicine, 1900-1920", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 70,1 (1996), 94-118.

In December of 1898 for example, Lt. Col. Robert O'Reilly, the designated chief surgeon for the American military occupation force in Cuba and later surgeon general of the United States, travelled to Jamaica. He was instructed by the army's high command:

"You are expected to make a careful inquiry with reference to the methods now in use in the island of Jamaica for protecting soldiers of the British Army stationed upon that island from fatal infectious diseases and from the deleterious effects of climatic influences."⁵⁴

In particular, O'Reilly was to examine the lessons learned by the British with regards to the housing, clothing, and feeding of soldiers in tropical environments and to prepare an analysis of the methods used to contain yellow fever, dysentery, and malaria. Field research in Jamaica, often referred to by contemporaries as "Graveyard of the English", was ordered because of hardship endured there by British troops, hardships deemed similar to those of the U.S. troops slated to police the new empire.

The observations made by O'Reilly and his subsequent report strongly influenced the army's sanitary and medical policies. New Khaki coloured uniforms, tropical helmets, strict food hygiene, improved architectural designs for military posts, increased troop rotation, and the prohibition of liquor were all introduced after the military command had been convinced of the applicability of valuable British experiences.

A further result of this inter-imperial exchange was the American construction of a military sanatorium and summer capital in Baguio on a highland plateau in the province of Benguet, 260 kilometers north of Manila.⁵⁵ Dean Worcester, University of Michigan zoologist and prominent member of the American colonial government in the Philippines, assured Washington of the benefits of creating such a hill-top retreat:

"It would be an admirable place for the acclimatization of newly arrived men. Soldiers suffering from the effects of unfavorable climatic conditions could be sent there to recuperate before they had actually broken down."⁵⁶

54 "Will Study British Methods", *The New York Times*, December 6, 1898, 14; also: "Troops in the Tropics", *The Washington Post*, December 6, 1898, 9.

55 On American urban planning in the colonial Philippines: Frank Schumacher, "Creating Imperial Urban Spaces: Baguio and the American Empire in the Philippines, 1898-1920", in: Anke Ortlepp, Christoph Ribbat (eds.), *Taking Up Space: New Approaches to American History* (Trier 2004), 59-75; David Brody, "Building Empire: Architecture and American Imperialism in the Philippines", *Journal of Asian-American Studies* 4,2 (2001), 123-45; Thomas S. Hines, "The Imperial Facade: Daniel H. Burnham and American Architectural Planning in the Philippines", *Pacific Historical Review* 41 (1972), 33-53; Robert R. Reed, *City of Pines: The Origins of Baguio as a Colonial Hill Station and Regional Capitol* (Baguio City, PI 1999).

56 Worcester Report quoted in: Schumacher, "Creating Imperial Urban Spaces", 63.

In 1904 the government appointed Daniel H. Burnham of Chicago, one of the nation's foremost architects and city planners, to prepare the construction plans for this new multifunctional hill station in close cooperation with William Cameron Forbes, a high-ranking colonial official and one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the summer capital idea.⁵⁷ In preparing their plans Forbes and Burnham closely studied the example of other colonial powers in South and Southeast Asia, but emphasized from the beginning that they understood their urban project as an adaptation of the British hill resort of Simla to Philippine circumstances. Launched in 1820 this station had served unofficially and officially as the summer capital of British India for more than a century and was the headquarters of the British Indian Army up to World War Two.⁵⁸ For Burnham, Forbes and many contemporary American colonial enthusiasts it was a place with almost mythical proportions, a powerful symbol of colonial opportunity and ingenuity in the hostile environment of the tropics. Not surprisingly Forbes noted in his diary: "It is one of the projects of the Philippine government to build a new city 5,000 feet above the sea, which will be to the Philippines much of what Simla is to India."⁵⁹

From 1903 on, the army occupied large tracts of land on the Baguio meadow and constructed Camp John Hay. In close collaboration with their British counterparts army surgeons improved the rotational scheme for American troops which O'Reilly had recommended in 1899. As the temporary return to the United States for large amounts of troops was deemed too costly and logistically inefficient, regiments would rotate between high- and lowlands to allow for recuperation and tropical acclimatization and thus serve an important military function, as the head surgeon for the Philippine Department argued:

"Camp John Hay is as necessary to U.S. troops as the hill stations of India are to English troops [...] Without Baguio, in the present lengthened tropical tour of service, a decided increase in insanity, in border line cases of various psycho-neuroses, and in tuberculosis would be inevitable."⁶⁰

57 On Burnham: Thomas S. Hines, *Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner* (New York 1974); Charles Moore, *Daniel H. Burnham: Architect, Planner of Cities* (Boston, MA 1921); Cynthia R. Field, *The City Planning of Daniel Hudson Burnham* (Phil. diss. Columbia University, 1974), especially ch. 7.

58 As introduction to the history of Simla: Dane Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley, CA 1996).

59 Forbes quoted in: Hines, "The Imperial Façade", 38.

60 Major P.C. Field, Medical Corps, n.d. untitled report extract, Dean Worcester Papers, Papers and Documents, vol. 3, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.

In the 'battle' against the degenerative impact of tropical climate one recommendation made by O'Reilly's observation in British possessions became particularly influential, his suggestion to recruit troops accustomed to the climatic conditions in the islands. He advised the army for example to raise African-American regiments, a policy which was begun in 1899.⁶¹ The logical next step was to follow the British approach completely and to raise native troops in the possessions.⁶²

In 1914, former president and first governor-general of the Philippines, William Howard Taft, recalled:

"The first thing we had to do in the Philippines was to bring about peace and that we did. We followed the example of England in other countries, and we organized a constabulary of Filipinos, and they made an excellent constabulary."⁶³

Yet the transfer of British models was not as easy and at first encountered considerable resistance. In March of 1899, the *Washington Post* printed the headline "Not to have a Native Army: Methods of Imperialistic England not to be followed". The paper reported:

"Although authorized by the new army law to recruit an army of 35,000 in the colonial possessions, the President will not avail himself of the opportunity. The real reason for this decision is said to be a desire to avoid as much as possible all appearance of imitating imperialistic England. In other words, the native troops of India are to have no counterpart in the United States."⁶⁴

But the sources for this presidential decision were more complicated. Ideas and products are usually transferred because they satisfy the demand of specific interest groups even beyond the confines of original curiosity. They are also often instrumentalized in contexts beyond the original topic of inquiry. The Democratic Party, for example, whose platform remained strongly opposed to empire, suggested a congressional amendment to the 1899 *Army Organization Bill* to allow the replacement of homeward bound American troops with native soldiers. The proposal's unspoken assump-

61 Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden 1898-1903* (Urbana, IL 1975), 261-92.

62 On native troops in American service: U.S. Department of War, Adjutant General's Office, Military Information Division, *Colonial Army Systems of the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Italy, and Belgium* (Washington 1901); see also: James Richard Woodlard, *The Philippine Scouts: The Development of America's Colonial Army* (Phil. diss. The Ohio State University, 1975); Brian McAllister Linn, "Cerberus' Dilemma: the US Army and internal security in the Pacific, 1902-1940", in: David Killingray, David Omissi, (eds.), *Guardians of Empire: The Armed Forces of the Colonial Powers, c. 1700-1964* (Manchester 1999), 114-36; George Y. Coats, *The Philippine Constabulary, 1901-1917* (Phil. diss. The Ohio State University, 1968).

63 William Howard Taft, "Empire", Address before the Empire Club of Canada, January 29, 1914, in: *The Empire Club of Canada Speeches 1913-1914* (Toronto 1915), 135-44.

64 "Not to have a Native Army", *Washington Post*, March 7, 1899, 1.

tion was that such a change in military organization through the appropriation of a British military model would ease a future withdrawal from the islands and foster the end of empire. The McKinley administration's apprehension about colonial support troops was thus at least in part motivated by partisan manoeuvring.

But the government was also hesitant because a number of congressional and military leaders had expressed serious doubts about the reliability of native troops and suggested that they would desert to join the independence movement. In this discursive context, the British example was used in the negative with frequent references to the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion. As Augustus Bacon of Georgia argued on the floor of the U.S. Senate:

"[...] I shall never forget the impression made upon me in looking at the pictorial newspapers [...] with the pictures of the sepoys bound to the mouths of cannon and blown to pieces [...] I do not want any such transactions under the American flag."⁶⁵

The military leadership was equally apprehensive and shared a negative disposition as long as Washington assumed that American troops would be able to quell the opposition with ease. The increasing intensification of the fighting and the army's inability to bring the war to a quick end, resulted in a completely new course, highly supportive of native troops.

The annual conference of the *Association of Military Surgeons* at the New York Academy of Medicine in 1900 was indicative of this new enthusiasm. In a widely reported presentation Major Louis L. Seaman advanced a number of arguments for native troops which heavily influenced the military discourse on this subject. Seaman had observed the British employment of native Chinese troops during the Boxer Rebellion.⁶⁶ He suggested that desertion was virtually unknown, that the troops held up well under fire, that their overall performance was above average, that their medical condition was excellent, and that their costs in pay and subsidies amounted to one fifth of the costs for a U.S. soldier in the Philippines.

With the American army under intense pressures of environment, illnesses, a furious resistance movement, and constant budgetary constraints, Seaman suggested to fill the ranks of regiments bound for home with Chinese from the islands or friendly Filipinos under white command. Under such pressures,

65 Quoted in: Kramer, "Empires Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons", 20.

66 "Military Surgeons Talk", *The New York Times*, June 2, 1900, 16.

"[...] it behooves the United States to follow the example of England at the earliest possible moment and to resort to the only reasonable course left open for the maintenance of her army in the Orient, namely the utilization of native troops."⁶⁷

His analysis was increasingly being shared in political and military circles, and by 1901 the first native regiments were founded which would ultimately grow close to 10,000 native soldiers in the Philippines and another 7,000 in Cuba and Puerto Rico, charged with policing the empire.

In addition to the continuous inter-imperial ideational exchanges on military matters, the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) offered the American military an unprecedented opportunity to compare its actions in the Philippines with British colonial warfare in South Africa. This war was an important milestone on the way to the close association between both nations and America's 'benevolent neutrality' during the war accelerated the rapprochement between both powers and utilized the conflict as a platform for the celebration of Anglo-Saxon unity.⁶⁸

The United States supported the British position on various levels. Throughout the conflict American diplomats secured British interests and looked after the welfare of British prisoners in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. American bankers floated loans that paid for roughly twenty per cent of Britain's war-related costs while the Boers were only able to borrow tiny sums. In addition, American exports to the British Empire rose by more than \$100 million over pre-war exports as the McKinley and later the Roosevelt administrations allowed the export of large quantities of military supplies such as canned beef, military boots, gunpowder, firearms, and nearly 200,000 horses and mules. Washington also rejected all international arbitration schemes designed to draft the United States as mediator and quietly settled American claims against the British naval blockade of South Africa.

This support for the British Empire was widely debated in the United States.⁶⁹ The anti-imperialists who had failed to prevent the creation of an

67 Louis Livingston Seaman, "Native Troops for Our Colonial Possessions", *Journal of the Association of Military Surgeons in the United States* 10,2 (November 1901), 237-52, here 250.

68 Thomas J. Noer, *Briton, Boer, and Yankee: The United States and South Africa, 1870-1914* (Kent, OH 1978); Richard B. Mulanax, *The Boer War in American Politics and Diplomacy* (Lanham, MD 1994); William N. Tilchin, "The United States and the Boer War", in: Keith Wilson (ed.), *The International Impact of the Boer War* (New York 2001), 107-22; Stuart E. Knee, "Anglo-American Understanding and the Boer War", *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 30,2 (1984), 196-208; Byron Farewell, "Taking Sides in the Boer War", in: *American Heritage* 27,3 (1976), 20-25, 92-97; Willard B. Gatewood, "Black Americans and the Boer War, 1899-1902", *South Atlantic Quarterly* 75,2 (1976), 226-44.

69 Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons".

American overseas empire utilized the South African War to condemn their own nation's imperial policies. Nationally acclaimed journalists and publicists, many members of Congress particularly from the Democratic party, portrayed the Boer War as a struggle for independence of a heroic people against the commercial interests of an unjust empire. British strategy in South Africa, in particular the introduction of the concentration policy, did much to damage the image of the empire in substantial segments of the American public.

In December 1900 Mark Twain emphasized this downside of Anglo-Saxon cooperation with his scathing critique of the British and American colonial wars. At a dinner in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York he introduced Winston Spencer Churchill with the words:

"For years I've been a self-appointed missionary to bring about the union of America and the motherland. [...] Yes, as a missionary I've sung my songs of praise. And yet I think that England sinned when she got herself into a war in South Africa which she could have avoided, just as we sinned in getting into a similar war in the Philippines. Mr. Churchill, by his father, is an Englishman; by his mother he is an American – no doubt a blend that makes the perfect man. England and America; yes we are kin. And now that we are also kin in sin, there is nothing more to be desired. The harmony is complete, the blend is perfect."⁷⁰

Consequently numerous Americans engaged in support for the Boer cause. They introduced resolutions and forwarded petitions or served with the Boers like the Irish Brigade which reached the battle field disguised as a medical corps of the International Red Cross. Others raised financial support, like Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who collected a relief fund from fellow undergraduate students at Harvard. Much of the pro-Boer activities were uncoordinated spontaneous outpourings of sympathy for the cause and never attracted national attention or influenced national policy.

The supporters, on the other hand, activated the sentiment of Anglo-Saxonist kinship and portrayed the Anglo-Boer War as an example for the advance of civilization.⁷¹ In this discourse the Boers appeared as backward looking people who stood in the way of progress and would benefit from the uplifting effects of British colonial rule.

In addition, the supporters of British policies feared that the defeat of the empire in South Africa would also be disastrous for the United States as a weakened Britain would encourage continental European power con-

70 Mark Twain, "China and the Philippines", in: Jim Zwick (ed.), *Mark Twain's Speeches (BoondocksNet Edition 2001)*, at: <http://www.boondocksnet.com/twaintexts/speeches/>, [22.10. 2004].

71 Stuart Anderson, "Racial Anglo-Saxonism and the American Response to the Boer War", *Diplomatic History* 2,3 (Summer 1978), 219-36.

tenders and threaten American interests. A British victory, on the other hand, would not only secure American trade, it would also further advance Washington's position vis-à-vis London on a number of aspects, most prominently the consolidation of American hegemony in the Western hemisphere and the exclusive control of a transoceanic canal in Central America.

Those strategic considerations were complemented by a number of less mundane and very pragmatic considerations. The simultaneity of America's colonial war in the Philippines and Britain's war in South Africa offered multiple connections for those Americans charged with the military security of the empire. The U.S. government sent a number of observers to South Africa to study British military tactics, military hardware and medical progress for their applicability to America's own colonial war in the Philippines.⁷² Most importantly, the simultaneous military blunders of both nations resulted in an intensive Anglo-American discourse on improving the professionalism of the armed forces and enabled close collaboration on military reform which laid the foundations for the long-lasting defence cooperation of Britain and America.⁷³

Mainly the simultaneity of events enabled American advocates of empire to frame their support and their understanding of American actions in the Philippine theater through reference to British experience and behaviour. This discursive strategy, the British Empire as reassuring reference point for the moral propriety of American actions, became widespread after the American military conduct in the archipelago came under close scrutiny and public criticism in the United States. In particular the so-called concentration zones designed to isolate Filipino resistance and the widespread use of torture (the so-called 'water-cure') by American soldiers interrogating Filipino prisoners of war, were in part legitimized by reference to British tactics during the Boer War.⁷⁴

72 For example: U.S. Department of War, Adjutant-General's Office, Military Information Division, *Reports on Military Operations in South Africa and China, July 1901* (Washington, DC 1901).

73 As one historian has observed: "The weaknesses exposed in the American and British armies in the Spanish-American War and Boer War, produced closer collaboration between the two states on military reform", Ronald J. Barr, *The Progressive Army: US Army Command and Administration, 1870-1914* (New York 1998), 59; see also: Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918* (Westport, CT 1978).

74 On the use of torture and its legal prosecution: Peter Maguire, *Law and War: An American Story* (New York 2001), 47-67; Guénael Mettraux, "US-Courts-Martial and the Armed Conflict in the Philippines (1899-1902): Their Contribution to National Case Law on War Crimes", *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 1,1 (2003), 135-50.

The executive and the military leadership's approach at first questioned the credibility of the charges. But after more and more witnesses of torture and abuse came forward, the government argued that American actions had been an appropriate response morally justified by the brutality of the guerrilla war waged against the colonizers by the independence movement. In a third and final step and in response to increasing Congressional demand for the court-martial of important commanders in the Philippine campaign, advocates of imperial expansion responded with frequent references to British actions in South Africa and claimed the moral superiority of the Anglo-American cause in taking up the "White Man's Burden". The analogies drawn from the empire's war against the Boers were to contextualize American actions as 'natural' and 'legitimate' responses by an army confronted with a guerrilla enemy.

"So we see", the *Washington Post* argued, "that the United States does not stand alone in having furnished isolated cases of bad conduct toward an inferior people or in exposing and punishing them. Human nature is very much alike everywhere."⁷⁵ And Major James Chester in his analysis of the "Great Lesson of the Boer War", argued that British policies in South Africa indicated that the concentration strategy was the only feasible response to the main challenge of guerrilla warfare, the separation of combatants and non-combatants. He rejected the anti-imperialists claim that the behaviour of American troops in the Philippines indicated a breakdown of morality and order and argued that the Boer War suggested that the guerrilla forces carried the ultimate responsibility for the violent escalation of the war:

"Guerrilla warfare is inconsistent with civilization. Whoever resorts to it compels his adversary to appeal to the ancient tactics of extermination. [...] The country may then be laid waste, and all its inhabitants killed or captured and disposed of the conqueror's pleasure."⁷⁶

The army in the Philippines had done nothing more nor less than its British cousins in Africa, so the argument. And because the empire was considered the most enlightened imperial power of all, American actions that followed the British example could not be considered indicative of a breakdown of moral order. War was hell and moral scruples about the conduct of troops, in South Africa or in the Philippines, were, according to many enthusiasts of empire, simply out of place as they irresponsibly delayed victory and thus slowed down the march of civilization:

75 "A Few African Parallels", *The Washington Post*, July 27, 1902, 18.

76 James Chester, "The Great Lesson of the Boer War", *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 32,121 (January/February 1903), 5-6.

"There is nothing easier than to criticize army movements from the comfortable seclusion of a library chair. [...] war is stern and cruel, and cannot reasonably anything else [...] War means fighting and fighting means killing."⁷⁷

Most of the Boer War analogies utilized Anglo-Saxonist rhetoric and ideology and emphasized the common tasks of America and Britain in spreading civilization and modernity. They also tapped into widespread pro-British sentiment, as on a more popular level, this discourse and the common war experience produced a widely held sense of common destiny and left a deep imprint even in popular culture. Not surprisingly, Elbridge Brooks, famous author of juvenile literature, concluded his popular *With Lawton and Robert* (1900), in which an American boy, volunteers in the Philippine War and fights for Britain in the Boer War, with the theme of imperial 'brotherhood': "[...] the Stars and Stripes in the Philippines, and the Union Jack in South Africa, are advancing the interests of humanity and civilization [...]."⁷⁸

Lessons Learned and the American Way of Empire

As Americans consolidated their colonial project in the Philippines they rhetorically became more assertive and returned to the old theme of exceptional national development.⁷⁹ The newcomers to the colonial club increasingly responded to critics at home and abroad, with the argument that British standards of enlightened empire did no longer apply to the American case as the United States aimed at benevolent assimilation and not exploitation or oppression, at tutelage in self government and not colonial rule *ad infinitum*. To support their claim, exceptionalists pointed towards American social engineering in the islands, in particular the celebrated jewel of colonial state-building, mass-based schooling, whose educational concepts differed radically from those in British possessions.⁸⁰

77 "Guerilla Warfare", *The Los Angeles Times*, January 20, 1901, B6.

78 Elbridge S. Brooks, *Lawton and Roberts: A Boy's Adventure in the Philippines and the Transvaal* (Boston, MA 1900), v.

79 On exceptionalism: There is a substantial historiography on American exceptionalism. As introduction: Daniel T. Rodgers, "Exceptionalism", in: Anthony Molho, Gordon S. Wood (eds.), *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (Princeton, NJ 1998), 21-40; Deborah L. Madsen, *American Exceptionalism* (Jackson, MS 1998); Adams, van Minnen (eds.), *Reflections on American Exceptionalism*; Ian Tyrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History", *American Historical Review* 96 (October 1991), 1031-55; by the same author also: "Thinking again about (American) Empire", www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/activities/usccpapers/empire.htm, [05.07.2002].

80 Sandra Gioia Treadway, *Terra Incognita: The Philippine Islands and the Establishment of American Colonial Policy, 1898-1904* (Phil. diss. University of Virginia, 1978); Stanley Karnow and Glenn A. May have argued that American colonial state building in the Philip-

This rhetorical attempt at self-assertion, however, did not undermine the continued close interaction between American and British colonizers. At least up to World War One the British Empire served as an admired, reassuring, and trusted reference point for proponents of empire. In this discourse, Americans did not perceive their empire exceptional but celebrated Anglo-Saxon unity through intense inter-imperial exchange and multi-layered connections.

As the examples of colonial governance and colonial military affairs amply demonstrate, the adaptation of British models was carried out selectively. Some arguments were appropriated, others rejected. Americans borrowed from both international and national frameworks, reconfigured their findings and adapted them to new contexts. The result was neither a carbon copy of the original nor old wine in new bottles, but a hybrid of transatlantic adaptation and national tradition that shaped the American way of empire.

pires was a program in self-duplication, a program that emphasized what policymakers believed to be the key to America's success, namely self-government, mass education, and economic development: Stanley Karnow, *In our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York 1989), Glenn A. May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims and Execution, and Impact of American Colonial Policy, 1900-1913* (Westport, CT 1980); in a similar vein Winfred Thompson has argued that American legal tradition shaped Washington's legal and administrative policy for the Philippines, Winfred Lee Thompson, *The Introduction of American Law in the Philippines and Puerto Rico, 1898-1905* (Fayetteville, AK 1989); finally H.W. Brands has identified the Philippines as a laboratory for American progressivism, H.W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (New York 1992).